

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 20-22, 26-32, 37, 41, 48, 49, 52 and 53 are presented for consideration.

Claims 20, 26-31 and 37 are independent. Claims 41, 48, 49, 52 and 53 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of recited subject matter. Applicants reserve the right to file a continuing application directed to the subject matter of the canceled claims. No new matter has been added.

Applicants note with appreciation that claims 20-22, 26-32 and 37 have been allowed over the art of record. To expedite allowance of this application, Applicants have canceled claims 41, 48, 49, 52 and 53 without prejudice or disclaimer of recited subject matter.

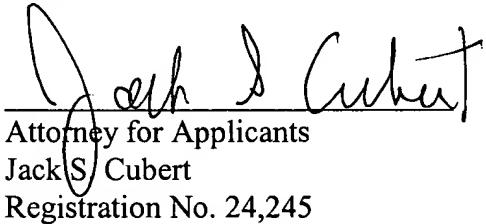
Applicants request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-noted Office Action.

Claims 41, 48, 49, 52 and 53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,545,746 to Nishi. Applicants submit that the cited art does not teach many features of the present invention, as previously recited in these claims. Nevertheless, as discussed above, to expedite allowance of this application, Applicants have canceled claims 41, 48, 49, 52 and 53 without prejudice or disclaimer of recited subject matter. All pending claims, namely, claims 20-22, 26-32 and 37 being allowable, Applicants submit that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants request favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action and an early Notice of Allowance.

Applicants also request that the Examiner contact their undersigned representative should any matters be deemed outstanding precluding allowance of this application.

Applicants' attorney, Steven E. Warner, may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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